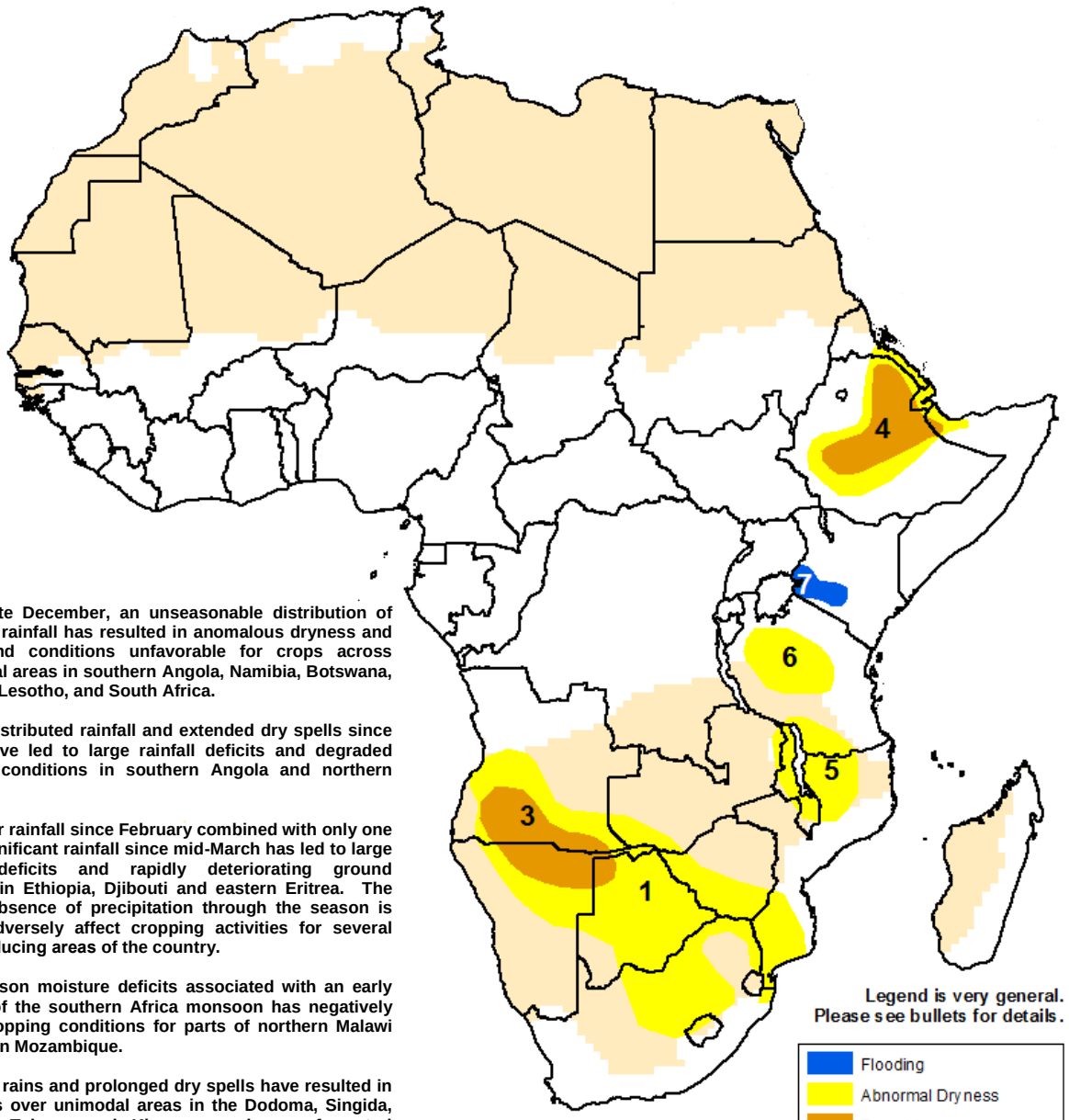
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
May 21 – May 28, 2015

- **Most of the greater Horn of Africa observed a decrease in rainfall over the previous week.**
- **Early season rainfall remains below normal for portions of West Africa.**



1) Since late December, an unseasonable distribution of monsoonal rainfall has resulted in anomalous dryness and poor ground conditions unfavorable for crops across several local areas in southern Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and South Africa.

3) Poorly distributed rainfall and extended dry spells since January have led to large rainfall deficits and degraded vegetation conditions in southern Angola and northern Namibia.

4) Very poor rainfall since February combined with only one week of significant rainfall since mid-March has led to large moisture deficits and rapidly deteriorating ground conditions in Ethiopia, Djibouti and eastern Eritrea. The extended absence of precipitation through the season is likely to adversely affect cropping activities for several "Belg" producing areas of the country.

5) Late season moisture deficits associated with an early cessation of the southern Africa monsoon has negatively affected cropping conditions for parts of northern Malawi and northern Mozambique.

6) Untimely rains and prolonged dry spells have resulted in failed crops over unimodal areas in the Dodoma, Singida, Shinyanga, Tabora, and Kigoma provinces of central Tanzania.

7) Persistent wetness and torrential amounts of rainfall triggered flooding for areas near Lake Victoria in Western Kenya and Nairobi. Enhanced rainfall is forecast in the region during the next seven days.

A decrease in rainfall for many regions over the previous week, including for moisture starved areas of northern Ethiopia

The pattern of widespread soaking rains throughout the Greater Horn present in the first dekad of May did not continue. A reduction of rainfall was observed for southern Somalia, southern and Central Ethiopia, much Kenya and bimodal Tanzania. Heavy rains were confined to extreme coastal regions of Tanzania and southern Kenya. Areas in southwest Kenya, stretching from Nairobi to the shores of Lake Victoria, that have experienced problems with flash flooding in recent weeks saw moderate to heavy rains once again. In Ethiopia, satellite estimates indicate more than 100mm of rainfall fell in eastern Oromia province and nearly as much in some western parts of the country over the past seven days (**Figure 1**). The overall pattern would seem to indicate a cessation to rains in the greater horn and a quick start to the "Kirempt" rains farther west.

Now that the "belg" rains are drawing to a close, analysis of satellite rainfall percent of normal since mid-February illustrates the poor performance of the season as a whole for the rift valley. Many areas in the Afar, northern Oromia, and northern Somali provinces in Ethiopia, as well as parts of Djibouti and Somaliland Somalia have received 50% or less of their normal rainfall (**Figure 2**). Conversely, much of Somalia and eastern Ethiopia has received greater than 120% of normal rainfall. Wetter-than-normal conditions can now be seen in parts of bimodal Tanzania indicating the elimination of moisture deficits and pointing toward improvement of conditions on the ground, which had previously been poor there.

For the upcoming outlook period, precipitation models indicate a return of widespread rain for Ethiopia. Above average precipitation is likely to persist in southwestern Kenya, while seasonable precipitation is likely in western Ethiopia. Areas unlikely to receive much rain include eastern Kenya, and southern Ethiopia. Relief from dryness appears to have been fleeting in the Afar province of Ethiopia, and Djibouti, which should be quite dry again. Concern remains for grazing activities and water resources moving forward in this area.

Satellite Estimated Weekly Rainfall (mm)
Valid: May 11 – May 17, 2015

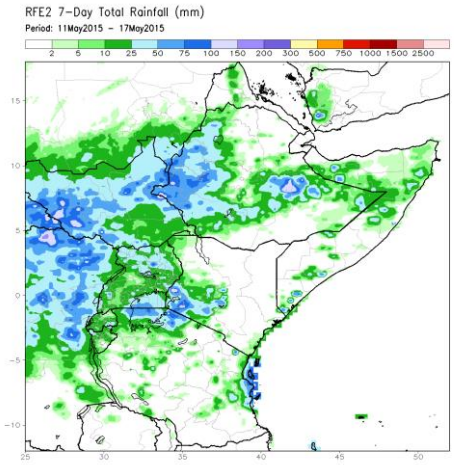


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Satellite Estimates 90-Day Percent of Normal Rainfall
Valid: February 16 – May 16, 2015

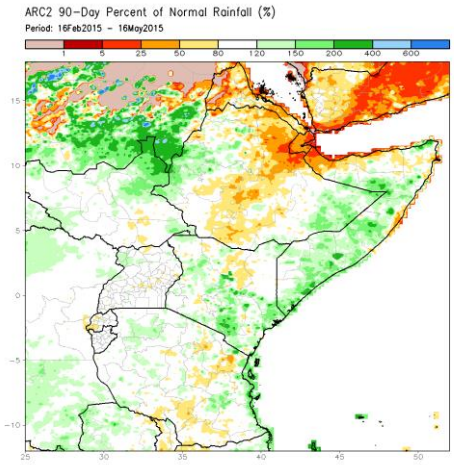


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Rains are well distributed, but seasonal totals remain below normal for some

Well-distributed rains fell across the West Africa region during the past 7 days. Quantities varied, with a heterogeneous distribution of regions above and below climatology. The largest estimated rainfall anomalies of +50-100mm or more were observed over Sierra Leone and Guinea (**Figure 3**). Southern coastal regions of West Africa saw negative anomalies. Rainfall deficits remain on the 30 and 90-day time scales, specifically for the Burkina Faso Region, Northern Nigeria, and Northern Central African Republic. Below normal early season rainfall has already led to abnormal dryness on the ground as evidenced by vegetation indices. The precipitation forecast indicates that below average rainfall centered over Cote D'Ivoire is likely. Above average rainfall is expected to the west and east of the region. These areas include Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia along with southern Cameroon, Gabon and Congo.

Satellite Estimated 7-day Rainfall Anomalies (mm)
Valid: May 10 – May 16, 2015

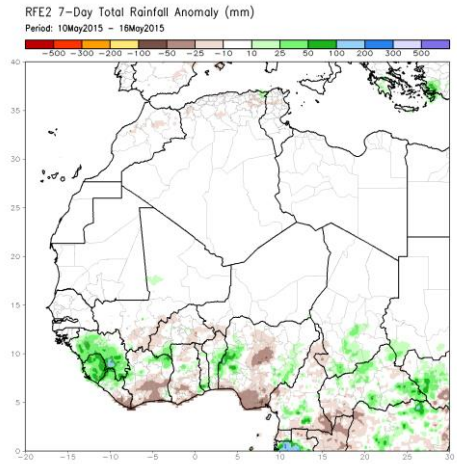


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

Note: The hazards outlook map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov or 1-301-683-3424.